

INDIGENT COUNSEL IN THE HARRIS COUNTY DISTRICT COURTS


A REPORT BROUGHT TO YOU BY RESTORING JUSTICE AND THE TEXAS CENTER FOR JUSTICE AND EQUITY

THIS REPORT USES DATA FROM HARRIS COUNTY'S NEW INDIGENT DEFENSE DASHBOARD TO SHOW HOW FREQUENTLY EACH OF THE DISTRICT COURT JUDGES UTILIZES THE HARRIS COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE, WHICH IS CAPABLE OF RECEIVING UP TO 20% OF ALL DISTRICT COURT INDIGENT APPOINTMENTS.

DISTRICT COURTS BY LOWEST PUBLIC DEFENDER APPOINTMENT RATE

DECEMBER 2021

#1 JUDGE BRIAN E WARREN




9.68%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

209TH DISTRICT COURT

#2 JUDGE RAMONA FRANKLIN




9.73%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

338TH DISTRICT COURT

#3 JUDGE HILARY UNGER



13.48%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

248TH DISTRICT COURT

<u>RANK</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE</u>	<u>% OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO</u>
4.	182ND	DANILO LACAYO	15.19%
5.	RIC	BROCK THOMAS	16.59%
6.	351ST	NATALIA "NATA" CORNELIO	16.67%
7.	232ND	JOSH HILL	16.97%
8.	179TH	ANA MARTINEZ	17.50%
9.	177TH	ROBERT JOHNSON	17.57%
10.	263RD	AMY MARTIN	17.88%
11.	183RD	CHUCK SILVERMAN	18.11%
12.	174TH	HAZEL B. JONES	18.18%
13.	262ND	LORI CHAMBERS GRAY	18.24%
14.	228TH	FRANK AGUILAR	18.97%
15.	185TH	JASON LUONG	19.46%
16.	482ND	MARITZA ANTU	19.57%
17.	184TH	ABIGAIL ANASTASIO	20.16%
18.	230TH	CHRIS MORTON	23.08%
19.	339TH	TE'IVA J. BELL	23.81%
20.	208TH	GREG GLASS	24.26%
21.	337TH	COLLEEN GAIDO	25.31%
22.	180TH	DASEAN JONES	25.40%
23.	176TH	NIKITA V. HARMON	26.40%
24.	178TH	KELLI JOHNSON	27.39%

TOTAL PDO APPOINTMENT RATE

19.14%

The 6th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution requires the appointment of an attorney for anyone facing criminal charges that is unable to afford their own. In Harris County, the judges of the district courts select attorneys for any indigent defendant facing charges in their court.

Despite the establishment of the Harris County Public Defender's Office in 2011, many of Harris County's elected district court judges fail to appoint the Public Defender's Office to capacity, opting to appoint private attorneys to represent indigent defendants instead.

Recent research conducted in Harris County shows that private attorneys receiving appointments are less effective than the Harris County Public Defender's Office in addition to frequently donating to judicial re-election campaigns and exceeding the Texas Indigent Defense Commission's maximum recommended caseload limits.